

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 18 July 1967



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DAILY BRIEF
18 JULY 1967

1. South Vietnam

The Assembly's election committee yesterday voted to disqualify the Thieu-Ky ticket. Even though the Assembly as a whole is expected to reverse the decision later today, the committee's action is not sitting well with the top military leaders, who are now meeting to decide what to do about it.

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The election committee also approved "Big" Minh's candidacy, an action the whole Assembly is expected to uphold.

Ky and Thieu appear to have reached agreement on how to use Ky's campaign apparatus to support their ticket. Ky's organization will be merged with Thieu's much smaller one, and a "central committee" formed to oversee the whole operation. Thieu will name the "secretary general," but Ky's men will actually run things.

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2. Vietnam -
Philippines

Embassy Manila says Filipinos are "agog with excitement and admiration" over Marcos' swift and secret foray into Vietnam on Sunday. Press accounts approvingly compare it to President Johnson's similar visit.

3. Rhodesia -
Britain

An emissary the British have had in Rhodesia for the past three weeks found no give in the position of the Smith regime. There is little prospect for an early break in the impasse.

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4. Soviet Union -
Syria

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5. Nigeria

All US government personnel, including AID contract employees and Peace Corps Volunteers, are being evacuated from the Eastern Region except for an augmented Consulate staff at Enugu. Arrangements are also being made to remove in the next few days all other non-Nigerians who wish to leave.

There is no change in the military situation.

6. Congo

The retreating mercenaries have stopped in the Punia area to the south-east of Kisangani. President Mobutu has told Ambassador McBride that his troops would have a tough time driving them out of this inaccessible jungle area. He believes, however, that he has pretty well bottled them up by ordering all bridges on key escape routes blown up.

Mobutu half expects the mercenaries to get out by air. He admitted that his government had no way to stop them.

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7. Laos

Ambassador Sullivan has told Premier Souvanna that he will hold up replacing the ten T-28s lost in the Communist penetration of Luang Prabang airfield Sunday until positive improvements in the security of the field are made. Souvanna indicated that as a first step he planned to fire the responsible Laotian commander.

In the meantime, the remaining T-28s will continue to stage combat missions out of Luang Prabang but will overnight at the more secure Vientiane airfield.

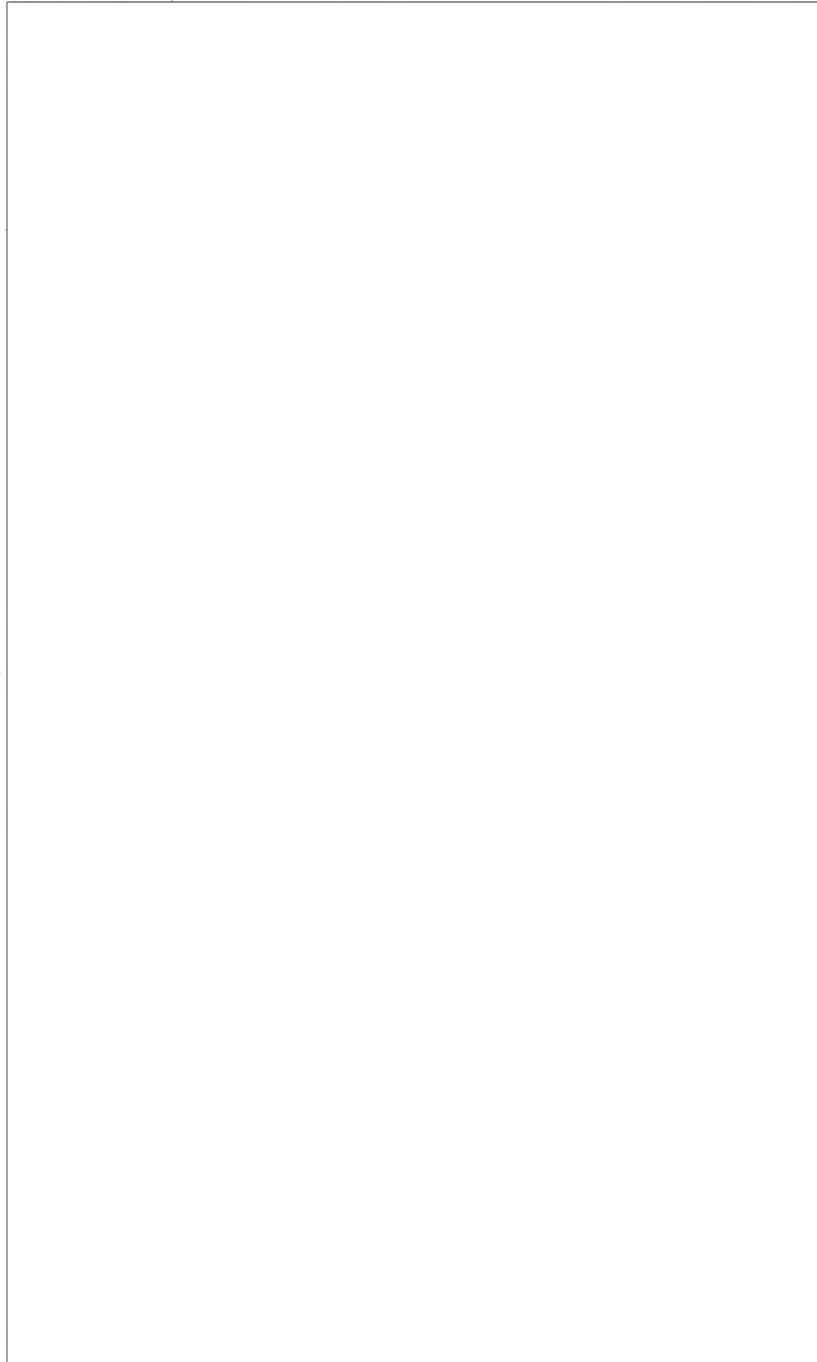
8. Panama

Last-minute difficulties have arisen which may set back the timetable for completion of action on the three draft treaties dealing with the Canal issue.

Foreign Minister Eleta, for one thing, has claimed that the map accompanying one of the draft treaties shows larger areas earmarked for US bases and smaller areas for joint administration than the negotiators agreed to. Also, many government leaders are said to think President Robles should delay coming to Washington and that the ratification process should be put off until all the drafts in the package have been more thoroughly studied.

9. Middle East

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